Vid. Megha P Rao

Director, Dhirana Academy of Classical Dance

+1(479)-270-2290

megha.p.rao.nwa@gmail.com

Youtube.com/user/mskaks1

facebook.com/megharaodancer

instagram.com/meghaprao_dance

Education

Masters of Arts- University of Bangalore, India.

Post-Graduate Diploma in Media Presentation – Loyola College, Chennai, India.

Bachelors in Arts (Journalism)- St Philomena's College, Mysore, India.

Bharatanatyam Junior Exam 1998 – Karnataka State Secondary Examination Board, India.
Bharatanatyam Senior Exam 2000 – Karnataka State Secondary Examination Board, India.
Bharatanatyam Vidwat Exam 1st Class 2003 – Karnataka State Secondary Examination Board, India.

Rangapravesam/Arangetram 2002 – A debut solo recital of 2-3 hours, which requires years of training, dedication and practice.

As an accomplished and dedicated artist of Bharatanatyam, a celebrated Indian classical dance form, Megha has over two decades of experience both as a performer and as a teacher. She is a Graded Doordarshan Artist and is Selected for inclusion on the Arkansas Arts On Tour (AOT) and Arts In Education (AIE) Rosters. Over the past decade, Megha has captivated the hearts of audiences across the Central U.S at multiple venues.

She has extended her creative journey in choreography combining many Indian dance forms. Uniquely conceptualized and choreographed productions like NAVARASA MARGAM, THE EXILED KING, ARDHANAREE and BAALA-TALE OF KANHA, TULA-BALANCE OF LIFE. In recognition of her contribution to the performing arts in Northwest Arkansas, she was recently awarded a grant by Artists 360, a program of Mid-America Arts Alliance, to support her Dance production – 'Baala – tale of Kanha'

She has performed 1000+ dance performances across India and the US, some of them nationally significant events such as 21st TANA Conference - St louis, NAVIKA- Cincinnati, OH. 12th & 14th American Natya Festival, St Louis. Sammilana 2023, Houston. Margazhi Nrityothsava 2023 in Chennai, India, NAVIKA – Austin, Tx. Nruthyotsava 2025 in Mysore, and *Sem Mann* by SHASTRAM in Chennai- 2025.

As Artistic Director she currently runs the 'Dhirana Academy of Classical Dance' based in Bentonville Arkansas, training over a hundred students in the US every year in Bharatanatyam. Over the past five years, she has organized and produced 'Pradarshana' an annual Fall student showcase, to encourage young talents. She also works with school districts and other organizations to bring Bharatanatyam to the community. Her goal is to Bridge the gap between society and the classical art form by inspiring, educating and guiding budding talent.

She often collaborates with like-minded artists across different genres of music and performing arts, expanding the vocabulary while staying true to the art form. She has been appointed as an Ambassador of Good Will by Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson, representing the spirit of an Arkansas traveler. She has been approved as a subject of biographical record in the esteemed Marquis Who's Who in America.

Awards

Natya Rani Shantala Award by kadamba Sainya Kannada Sanghatane.

Award of Excellence in Entertainment for Stage Performances 2015 – Tamil Community, Northwest Arkansas, USA

Rajyothsava Prashasthi awarded by Jilla Kannada Sahitya Parishat an organization promoting art and culture in Karnataka

Aryabhata Award 2006 by Aryabhatta Cultural Organizations Bengaluru

Karnataka State IMA Cultural Award 2003 as part of 69th state medical conference.

Ugadi Puraskar 2004 by Chaitanya Balaga, Mandya which promotes social and cultural development in Mandya Karnataka India.

Honors

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson has authorized and commissioned Vidushi Megha Rao, an Arkansas traveler, to serve as an Ambassador of Good Will.

Karavali Samskruthika Sangha Mandya honored Ms Rao as part of Vasantotsav 2004

Shiv Sena Karnataka Mandya District honored Ms Rao with Puruskrita Pratibhe -2001

Sri Ranjini Kalavedhike Mandya – Ugadi Puraskar 2003

Chaitanya Balaga 2006

Core Accomplishments

- Selected for inclusion on the Arkansas Arts On Tour (AOT) and Arts In Education (AIE) Rosters.
- Has been appointed as an Ambassador of Good Will by Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson, representing the spirit of an Arkansas traveler.
- Recepient of grant from Artists 360, a program of Mid-America Arts Alliance, with generous support from the Walton Family Foundation.
- Graded **Doordarshan Artist** – Doordarshan is an Indian national television channel.
- Has extended her creative journey in choreography combining many Indian dance forms. Uniquely conceptualized and choreographed productions like NAVARASA MARGAM, THE EXILED KING, ARDHANAREE, BAALA-TALE OF KANHA and TULA_BALANCE OF LIFE.
- Collaborated with Trike Theatre and Ra-Ve Cultural Foundation to create an original adaptation of the well-known story, ***The Jungle Book*** mixed with theatrical storytelling and classical Indian dance.
- Established Dhirana Academy for Indian Classical Dance which trains 100+ students and creates opportunities for them to perform and also exposes them to various learning opportunities such as dance workshops, dance competitions, events. Also graduates senior disciples through Arangetram. Since 2017 Dhirana Academy organizes an annual event 'Pradashana' for young students to have the experience performing for a wider audience
- Since 1996 performed 1000+ dance performances across India and the US, some of them nationally significant events such as Nrityotsav-Mumbai, West Bengal Tourism Festival Calcutta, Pallavothsav Mysore, Navaraspur Utsav Bijapur, Hampi Utsav, India Fest – Little Rock, 21st TANA Conference -St louis, American Natya Festival- St Louis, Sammilana2023 – Houston,Tx, NAVIKA- Austin Tx.
- She was an early achiever in the Bharatanatyam and won many national and state competitions conducted by government and private organizations. Considering her accomplishments in the field she has been regularly invited to perform by various organizations in India and USA.

Artistic Exhibitions/Performance

- Nruthyothsava 2025 – Mysore
- Sem Mann by SHASTRAM in Chennai – Jan 2025
- TuLA-Balance of Life @Thedan Performing Arts Center, Bentonville Ar 2024
- John Brown University– International Food Festival – Siloam Springs Nov 2023
- NAVIKA – Austin Tx – Nov 2023
- 14th American Natya Festival – St Louis, Mo - 2023
- Bentonville Film Festival – The Momentary- June 2023

Prathiba Sanje 2005 – Akhila Karnataka Karavali Samskrithika Vokutta

Kannada Bharati-2006

Mandya zilla Brahmana Sabha 2002

Gurudev Academy of Fine Arts

JUDGING

SBAT Nrithyorvashi Award, National Level Solo Bharathanatyam Competition 2023.

Performing Arts Discovery (PAD) program 2022 - Served on the selection panel for the second round of the PAD program, a national level selection process for U.S.-based artists with a demonstrated readiness to tour internationally.

Saptami Nationals/Global 2020 – Bharatnatyam competitions conducted by Saptami Foundation, Dallas.

Dhim TANA - A National level dance and music competition conducted by Telugu Association of North America in St Louis in 2017

National level bharatanatyam Junior and Senior level bharatnatyam dance competitions conducted by GURUDEV ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS.

- Artist 360 Full Circle Showcase – Crystal Bridges Museum – April 2023
- Matumaini – Fayetteville Mar 2023
- Margazhi Nrityothsava 2023 – Andra Mahila Sabha, Chennai 2023
- LIVE in America at The Momentary – June 2022
- Baala-Tale of Kanha - @Walton Arts Center, Fayetteville – 2022
- Collision-When visions combine, The momentary, Bentonville-2021.
- 12th American Natya Festival, St. Louis-2021
- The Exiled King-Walton Arts Center, Fayetteville-2021
- In The Atrium-Walton Arts Center, Fayetteville-2021
- Value The World Series-Sapthami Foundation-2020
- Ardhanaree -A duet performance for RVCF 2020
- International Art & Culinary Week Downtown Bentonville Inc.2020
- Friday Nights at the Lawn by Crystal Bridges Museum 2020
- NAVIKA 2019 at Cincinnati OH
- Charity and Fundraising event by AAPI – 2019
- Walmart Asian Pacific Associate Resource Network – APAN Heritage Event 2019
- Navarasa Margam 2018
- India Fest, Little Rock, Arkansas 2018
- Sri Lanka Flood Relief Fund Raiser Event Bentonville Arkansas USA 2017
- Multicultural Festival at Root Elementary School Fayetteville Arkansas USA 2017
- India Fest, Little Rock, USA 2017
- TANA Festival St Louis Missouri USA 2017
- Fundraiser for Pediatric Cancer Treatment Bentonville Arkansas USA 2016
- India Fest Little Rock Arkansas USA 2016
- Sargam, Northwest Arkansas, USA. 2011,2012, 2014, 2016
- Performance at Mantralaya on Vardanti and Pattabhisheka 2010
- Hampi Utsav – Group Performance with Vidya Venkatraman and11 troupe at Hampi 2010
- West Bengal Tourism Festival- Kolkata 2010
- Dasara- Main Palace- with Dr Vasundhara Doreswamy in “Durga” 2010
- Navaraspur Utsav – A National festival – Bijapur 2010
- Pallavothsava – Mysore 2010
- Indian Institution of World Culture- Bengaluru 2010
- ISKCON Temple- with Dr Vasundhara Doreswamy and troop 2010
- 2006: Performed at “Nalanda Nrityotsav”- A national level dance festival held at Mumbai.
- Charity event by NWA AAPI (American Association of Physicians of Indian origin) Bentonville Ar 2017
- Sammilana 2023 by Shivalli Kutumba in Houston Tx.